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SUBJECT: UNSC: UNSCR 1559 CONSULTATIONS - UN ENVOY CITES  
SOME PROGRESS BUT NONE ON DISARMAMENT OF MILITIAS

REF: STATE 114981

11. (SBU) Summary: Terje Roed-Larsen briefed the Security Council October 30 that significant progress had been achieved in the implementation of UNSCR 1559 with the election of Lebanese President Sleiman, the adoption of a Lebanese electoral law, and the Lebanese-Syrian agreement to establish diplomatic relations. He stressed that there was no progress toward the disbanding and disarmament of Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias, as required by both the 1989 Taif Agreement and UNSCR 1559. He underlined the serious threat that both Hizballah and other non-Lebanese militias pose to the Lebanese government and called for all parties who maintain ties with Hizballah, in particular Syria and Iran, to support its transformation into a political party. Council members largely concurred with Larsen's statements and several agreed that their main concern was the lack of progress on disarming the militias. During consultations, Larsen spoke more frankly and stressed the fragility of the Lebanese state and the need for continued international involvement. He spoke against combining the UNSCR 1701 and 1559 mandates on Lebanon for UN personnel security reasons since 1559 aggressively deals with militia disarmament while 1701 involves peacekeepers. The Russian DPR used the consultations to comment on the Syria-Iraq border incident at Abu Kamal and called for the "proper condemnation" of the violation of a member state's sovereignty. End summary.

Larsen briefs Council on  
UNSCR 1559 implementation  
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12. (SBU) Terje Roed-Larsen, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the implementation of UNSCR 1559, briefed an October 30 meeting of the Security Council on the Secretary-General's eighth semi-annual report on UNSCR 1559. (Note: The Mission e-mailed both the text of the report and Larsen's briefing to IO/UNP.) Larsen reminded the Council that UNSCR 1559 is a support mechanism of the Security Council for the principles the Lebanese committed themselves to in the 1989 Taif Agreement -- the withdrawal of all foreign troops from the country and the disarming and disbanding of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias. On the positive side, Larsen welcomed the progress over the last six months, including the election of President Sleiman, the adoption of a new electoral law, and the October 15 announcement by the Foreign Ministers of Lebanon and Syria to establish diplomatic relations. He said he looked forward to their opening of embassies and the full delineation of their common border, particularly where the border is uncertain or disputed. He said the UN remains concerned with the "general porosity of the Syrian-Lebanese borders" and the permanent presence of para-military infrastructures belonging to Palestinian militia straddling the border. He noted the continued violation of Lebanese airspace by Israeli aircraft and Israel's continued occupation of northern Ghajar, in violation of Lebanon's sovereignty and UNSCR 1701. He said the Secretary-General received a letter October 16 from

Lebanese Prime Minister Siniora expressing concerns at the threats by Israel against Lebanon. Larsen said the Secretary-General is disturbed by the escalation of threats between Israel and Hizballah and urges all parties to cease their public discourse.

13. (SBU) Larsen stressed that the events in May "served as a shocking illustration of how armed groups outside the control of the Government of Lebanon brought the country to a near state of collapse." He stressed that there was no tangible progress towards the disbanding and disarming of militias, as required by both the Taif Agreement and UNSCR 1559. He stressed that Hizballah remains the most significant Lebanese militia and that it maintains a "massive para-military infrastructure separate from the state, including a secure network of communications." He said the Secretary-General "calls on Hizballah to comply with all relevant SC resolutions, and urges all parties which maintain close ties with it, in particular Syria and Iran, to support its transformation into a political party proper." Larsen highlighted the serious threat posed by non-Lebanese armed groups, both Palestinian militia and the "emergence and apparent strengthening of extremist elements and foreign fighters based largely in and around Tripoli." He noted that the "scares from last spring" may have prompted a rearmament of certain militias. He cited with concern the "emerging pattern of lethal attacks against Lebanese Armed Forces, one of the most prominent symbols of authority of the state." He reiterated the Secretary-General's conviction that the disarmament of Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias should taken place through a political process that results in the Lebanese government's monopoly on the use of force.

USUN NEW Y 00001000 002 OF 003

Council members express concern  
with lack of militia disarmament  
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14. (SBU) All fifteen Security Council members welcomed the Secretary-General's report and reiterated many of Larsen's points in their statements during consultations, October 30. They lauded President Sleiman's election, the adoption of the new electoral law, and the agreement establishing diplomatic relations between Lebanon and Syria. South Africa repeated its long-held assertion that the delineation of borders and establishment of diplomatic relations are bilateral matters and should not be the purview of the Council. Most members (with the exception of South Africa, Libya, and Indonesia) agreed that their main concern was the lack of progress on disarming Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias, especially Hizballah. Libya emphasized that disarmament is an internal matter for the Lebanese government, and Indonesia said such a step must be through political dialogue. Several, including the U.S., Italy, Belgium, Indonesia, and Croatia called for greater Lebanese efforts on border security and suggested international assistance/capacity-building. Many delegations raised UNSCR 1701 issues, including France, Belgium, Indonesia, and Vietnam on the need for Israel's withdrawal from northern Ghajar and progress on the Sheba'a Farms. Libya specifically condemned Israel's continued occupation of northern Ghajar and Sheba'a and its overflights of Lebanon. Burkina Faso and Indonesia also noted the repeated Israeli overflights of Lebanon as a violation. Costa Rica called for the Council to be objective and take a stand on both Israel and Syria's violations of its resolutions. (Note: Mission drew heavily on reftel for U.S. remarks and added language concurring with the report's conclusion on the threats posed by non-Lebanese armed groups and noting U.S. support to UNRWA's emergency appeal for Lebanon, to which the Secretary-General's report refers. End note.)

Larsen stresses fragility of  
Lebanese state and need for  
continued international involvement  
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15. (SBU) Larsen expressed his views more frankly at the end of the consultations in response to several questions posed by Ambassador Wolff. He said that the Council should be incredibly proud of what it has done in Lebanon. He said that without the Council's involvement, Israel would never have withdrawn, there would never have been parliamentary elections, nor Presidential elections in 2008. He stressed, "The international component has been crucial and will be in the future." He cited opinion polls commissioned in July by the International Peace Institute that showed 90 percent support for the Doha Agreement, 97 percent support for the rejection of force, 74 percent support for the UN, and 80 percent support for UNIFIL. While the Lebanese state has made real strides, he said, it is fragile and remains vulnerable because of the militias and their rearmament. He said the international community needs to continue its work in support of the Lebanese government. He stressed that such support does not violate Lebanon's sovereignty since it is an international demonstration of support for the Taif Agreement and helps prevent destabilization and violence in Lebanon.

Larsen urges against combining  
Council mandates on Lebanon  
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16. (SBU) The Panamanian DPR raised whether the UNSCR 1559 implementation process should be combined with the UNSCR 1701 process since the "comments tend to be the same." He suggested grouping the two together as a single debate or looking at how to group the issues in a more coherent manner. The South African expert, who delivered his state's remarks, spoke later and suggested that the Council should assess whether to restrict its remarks only to the specific resolution at hand or whether to merge the two resolutions. Larsen responded to both remarks stating that while it might be good in theory to group together the resolutions, in practice they had to be kept separate for personnel security reasons. He said that UNSCR 1559 is an aggressive resolution that calls for the disbanding and disarmament of militias. If "lumped with UNSCR 1701, it would politicize peacekeepers," he emphasized. (Comment: Mission agrees with Larsen's concerns about UN personnel security if UNSCRs 1559 and 1701 are combined. However, Mission believes it is worth having the Council's political coordinators review the frequency of reports and adjust their timing to reflect a more coherent approach to the Council's work on Lebanon and forestall Council fatigue on Lebanon. End comment.)

USUN NEW Y 00001000 003 OF 003

Russia uses 1559 consultations to  
comment on Syria-Iraq border incident  
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17. (SBU) Russia was the only country that raised the incident on the Syrian-Iraqi border at Abu Kamal during the consultations. The Russian DPR, speaking second, raised the matter at the end of his remarks. He said Russia viewed the event, which he ascribed to the U.S. military, with concern. Even though the action may have been taken to combat terrorism, he said there was a need for "proper condemnation" of the violation of a member state's sovereignty. He then noted that there are appropriate mechanisms established for regional security, such as the Working Group on (Border) Security set up at Sharm al-Shaykh in 2007 and he said he hoped these could be used in the future. No other Council members referred to the Russian remarks in their statements. Ambassador Wolff, speaking sixth, did not address the Russian remarks in the U.S. statement.  
Khalilzad